	Application No.	Applicant(s)
Notice of Allowability	09/870,021	ANDO ET AL.
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	C. Michelle Tarae	3623	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to <u>Amendment submitted December 11, 2006</u>.

2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are <u>3-7 and 10-18</u>.

3. ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

    a) ☒ All   b) ☐ Some*   c) ☐ None of the:

        1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

        2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____ .

        3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

    * Certified copies not received: _____ .

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application. **THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.**

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.

5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.

    (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached

        1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____ .

    (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____ .

    Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).

6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2. ☐ Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO/SB/08), Paper No./Mail Date _____

4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material

5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application

6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413), Paper No./Mail Date _____ .

7. ☐ Examiner's Amendment/Comment

8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance

9. ☐ Other _____ .

ALLOWANCE

1.   The following is an Allowance in response to the Amendment submitted on

December 11, 2006. Claims 3-7 and 10-18 are currently amended. Claims 3-7 and 10-

18 are now pending in this application.

Reasons for Allowance

2.   Claims 3-7 and 10-18 are allowed.

3.   The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: None of the

prior art of record, taken individually or in any combination, teach, *inter alia*, a method,

system or computer readable recording medium which stores a program for causing a

computer to predict a sales volume or market share at the launch of a new product,

including: numerically evaluating a plurality of past products and said new product, with

respect to a plurality of factors which are considered to influence a sales volume or

market share, by more than one people; and calculating a sales volume or market share

of said new product for each one of said people based on numerical values on said past

products and said new products given by each one of said people with respect to said

factors and actual sales volumes or actual market shares of said past products, and

obtaining said factors contributing to the calculation and the magnitude of said factors,

via a structured neural network, wherein comprehensive evaluations on said past

products and said new products for each one of said people are calculated based on

the numerical values with respect to said factors, relationships are calculated between

the comprehensive evaluations on said past products by each one of said people and

the actual sales volumes or actual market shares of said past products, the sales

volume or market shares of said new product are calculated for said more than one

people based on the relationships and the comprehensive evaluations on said new

product, and a sales volume or market share of said new product is predicted based on

the calculated sales volume or market shares of said new product for said more than

one people, the sales volumes or market shares calculated for said more than one

people by said structured neural network, and said factors contributing to the calculation

and the magnitude of said factors.

The prior art most closely resembling Applicant's claimed invention is Yao et al.,

"Forecasting and Analysis of Marketing Data Using Neural Networks."

Yao et al. teaches a Marketing Decision Support System that allows decision

makers to evaluate factors that influence the sales performance of a product. The

Marketing Decision Support System uses a neural network model to evaluate the

factors associated with the products. Correlation coefficients are calculated for each

factor, indicating the relationship, or influence, between the factor and the sales

volume. The correlation coefficients in addition to the predicted sales values and the

actual sales value are all used as variables in the neural network as they are all

propagated through the neural network to calculate and refine the relationship between

the factors and the sales performance. However, Yao et al. does not expressly teach

the combination of the limitations as discussed above.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later

than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably

accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on

Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

4.   The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to

applicant's disclosure.

- JP02000112914A discusses a learning method for neural circuit network;

- JP407175787A discusses a sales amount predicting device.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the

examiner should be directed to C. Michelle Tarae whose telephone number is 571-272-

6727. The examiner can normally be reached Monday – Friday from 8:30am to

5:30pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's

supervisor, Tariq Hafiz, can be reached at 571-272-6729.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the

Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for

published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR.

Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only.

For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should

you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic

Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

C. Michelle Tarae
Primary Patent Examiner
Art Unit 3623

March 2, 2007